



Facts about

Surveillance of Health Care Workers with HIV/AIDS

Of the adults reported with AIDS in the United States through June 30, 1996, 18,014 had been employed in health care. These cases represented 5.3 percent of the 340,889 AIDS cases reported to CDC for whom occupational information was known (information on employment in the health care setting was missing for 181,903 reported AIDS cases).

The type of job is known for 17,057 (95 percent) of the 18,014 reported health care workers with AIDS. The specific occupations are as follows: 1,488 physicians, 101 surgeons, 4,010 nurses, 415 dental workers, 333 paramedics, 2,424 technicians, 882 therapists, and 3,677 health aides. The remainder are maintenance workers, administrative staff, etc. Overall, 76 percent of the health care workers with AIDS, including 1,178 physicians, 79 surgeons, 3,019 nurses, 325 dental workers, and 233 paramedics, are reported to have died.

CDC is aware of 51 health care workers in the United States who have been documented as having seroconverted to HIV following occupational exposures. Twenty-four have developed AIDS. These individuals who seroconverted include 19 laboratory workers (16 of whom were clinical laboratory workers), 20 nurses, 6 physicians, 2 surgical technicians, 1 dialysis technician, 1 respiratory therapist, 1 health aide, and 1 housekeeper/maintenance worker. The exposures were as follows: 44 had percutaneous (puncture/cut injury) exposure, 5 had mucocutaneous (mucous membrane and/or skin) exposure, 1 had both percutaneous and mucocutaneous exposure, and 1 had an unknown route of exposure. Forty-six exposures were to HIV-infected blood, 3 to concentrated virus in a laboratory, 1 to visibly bloody fluid, and 1 to an unspecified fluid.

CDC is also aware of 108 other cases of HIV infection or AIDS among health care workers who have not reported other risk factors for HIV infection and who report a history of occupational exposure to blood, body fluids, or HIV-infected laboratory material, but for whom seroconversion after exposure was not documented. The number of these workers who acquired their infection through occupational exposures is unknown.

For more information:

CDC National AIDS Hotline: 1-800-342-AIDS
Spanish: 1-800-344-7432
Deaf: 1-800-243-7889

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1-800-458-5231